KATHARINE NORTH.

XVII.

LLANDAFF AND MISS WYCKHAM.

While Owen Llandafff devoted himself to Miss Wyckham in the following fortnight, his stepmother and her niece devoted themselves to each other with such success that the elder woman's face grew to have a rested look upon it, while the younger countenance at times wore an almost glorified expression.

On that remote Maine coast the existence of Marcellus Grove somewhere in Massachusetts was merely the existence of a myth. Katharine did not write home. She knew that her father and mother were ignorant as to where she was. She was content in the assurance her aunt gave her that Mr. North only wished to be certain of hearing in case there was anything he ought to know. He preferred to be ignorant; he felt that ignorance was his best armor.

Now, for once, Katharine lived ideal days. She was free. The only eyes belonging to her which looked upon her were eyes of love and approval.

Mrs. Llandaff sauntered about with her or sat for hours silently on the shore.

Many times the girl would turn slowly toward her companion, glance up at her, then turn away without speaking. Or she would reach forth and take the woman's hand for a moment and say:

"Aunt Kate, this is freedom, isn't it? I am free to be myself."

Mrs. Llandaff would smile, and respond:

"Little girl, are you happy?"

"Oh, yes."

"That is right. It isn't wicked in the least to be happy."

"I'm so glad to know that."

"Kate," said Mrs. Llandaff, "I don't believe in being miserable. When happiness comes your way, seize it, make much of it. What else is there? Of what else are you sure?"

Katharine gazed intently up at the sky, for at this moment she was lying on the sand. All at once she sat erect.

"Aunt Kate," she said, almost sharply, "but to be right, to have the right on your side--surely we must give up happiness for that."

The other smiled as she answered, easily:

"Don't worry. Natures like yours never drift into a happiness that is wrong. Don't fall into any detestable habit of self-examination. Just live. What else are we here for? Just live, I tell you." Mrs. Llandaff began to speak more earnestly, and her mere voice had a peculiarly convincing power with any listener, and particularly with one so drawn to her as this girl already was.

"Kate, you are not having any doubts about the right or wrong of your leaving that man?"

"No. No. Not a doubt," strongly. "I was only thinking that I was almost afraid it must be wicked some way to be happy like this," gazing up at her aunt.

"Let me take the responsibility," was the rejoinder. "That was a horrible way—that way of inculcating a perpetual restraint, a constant snubbing of yourself. There's nothing so depressing as it is to fall into the habit of snubbing yourself. Others will do that for you all that it necessary. Give yourself to yorsuelf with abandon. Good heavens! As long as you are not evil, why prune, and bend, and twist this or that inclination? And I'm tired of this fancy that we are so evil, that discipline is the business of life. There was a time when I experienced religion and thought that I was a vile worm of the earth. But I've outlived all that. I don't think now I'm the least bit of a worm. I believe in enjoyment."

Mrs. Llandaff had not survived her earnestness. She had raised herself to a sitting position. Now she sank back again on the sand. She laughed as she added:

"I know a man who was often quoting that cynical saying, 'Be good and you'll be happy, but you won't have a good time.'"

"Oh," exclaimed Katharine, "that is dreadful. You don't believe that, do you, Aunt Kate?"

But Mrs. Llandaff had finished her talk for the time. She only said languidly:

"It's not of the slightest consequence what we believe."

Then she closed her eyes and Katharine's mind drifted in some indefinable way as it had never drifted before.

So the days went on in languid, utter idleness.

"When I rest, I rest," Mrs. Llandaff said: "You must know," with that good-natured, satirical smile she sometimes used, "that the drain upon a great public speaker is very severe. How can I charm the multitude if I do not recuperate thoroughly?"

Katharine listened and lived in the atmosphere of this woman. Sometimes involuntary, half-formed, but searching questions came into the girl's mind. Then she would fix her eyes on Mrs. Llandaff's face. But she found no answer. That attractive, refined countenance vouchsafed nothing at such times. Once, at the hotel, Katharine had heard some one say, in speaking of Mrs. Llandaff, "She looks as if she had enjoyed a great deal."

That remark had unreasonably startled the girl. She used to refer to it in her own mind. She had heard it said of this one or that, "She looks as if she had suffered a great deal." That did not seem strange. That was natural.

For an impressible nature, the mere living with a certain kind of a person tends to take away resisting power. Of course Katharine could not know that, she could not suspect it.

The hours glided into each other in the most charming way. Every night when Katharine put her head on the pillow she told herself joyously, "To-morrow will be another day."

Mrs. Llandaff had many moments af contemplating the girl with tender, lingering eyes. Then she would frown and think:

"What a hard-hearted wretch Roxy is! Is not my philosophy better than hers?"

At Nantasket, Llandaff continued to boat and to drive and ride, and to play lawn tennis, and to stro[ll] with Miss Wyckham.

Miss Wyckham often asserted that Nantasket was really vulgar, that the best people never dreamed of coming there. Still, she kept on staying.

Llandaff in those days quite admired himself. He was sure that not by so much as the fluttering of an eyelash did he give sign of how deadly tired he was. He used to look at his companion and imagine how he should be when he had lived with her five, ten, twenty years.

He had asked her to marry him because his judgment had approved. He almost thought now that if he had another life to live in this world, he would never perform a single act because his judgement approved.

But a fire is nearly sure in the end to break out.

One morning, Llandaff woke with the sense that this state of things was absolutely intolerable. His first coherent idea was that if Miss Wyckham should feel to him as he felt to her, he should esteem it a gross injustice if she did not tell him, and thus give them both a chance to escape a life-long mistake.

He dressed hurriedly, as if he were going to seek her on the instant. When at last he found himself sitting beside her in her phaeton, he looked at her in secret amazement that he should ever have thought himself brave enough to say what was in his mind.

Nevertheless, he was really a brave man, and he meant to speak those words. There was no way of mildly approaching the subject.

When the ponies had been turned into a lonely road which bent and twisted through Cohasset pastures, the young man suddenly made the statement, that he had something particular to say, and that it was very difficult to find words that should express what he had in his mind.

Miss Wyckham turned her calm eyes upon him and said that he generally was able to find words enough, she had noticed.

It is not a particularly agreeable task for a gentleman to tell a lady to whom he is engaged that, on second thoughts, he finds he does not wish to marry her.

Llandaff gazed helplessly about him.

Then he knit his eyebrows together very much as a tragic hero on the stage knits his brows. When he became aware of this, he felt ridiculous, and immediately unbent his brows.

"The fact is," he burst out, "I'd rather be hanged than say what I must say."

"Then why say it?" placidly inquired the lady.

"Because I must. It isn't fair to you or to me to go on a day longer and not make you the confession of my mistake. I ought not to have asked you to be my wife."

This was certainly explicit. Miss Wyckham's fingers tightened somewhat on the ponies' lines, but not so much that their sensitive mouths felt it.

She remained silent. "It isn't of any use to try to soften the words," began Llandaff again, "there would be the meaning of them just the same, and what good would it do to tell you of my respect and cordial liking and—and——" here he found that his voice failed before the aspect of the woman beside him.

If she only would not behave quite so perfectly Llandaff felt that his position would be much more endurable. He did not notice her fingers on the reins. He could only see that her face had hardened a little, and it still seemed to preserve its strictly well-bred look. Miss Wyckham was, indeed, well bred, and she would have died rather than participate in a scene.

Did this man think that perhaps she was going to plead with him to marry her?

That was the question in her mind as she turned her head and met his eyes, which revealed a great deal of suffering.

"How can you ever forgive me"? he groaned, suddenly extending his hand to take hers.

She drew back very slightly.

"Forgive you, Mr. Llandaff?" in a high, clear voice; "surely you must know that I am as grateful as you can be that you have made this discovery in time."

Here Miss Wyckham reached forward, took the whip and gently touched the flanks of the off pony.

Llandaff groaned again inarticulately. He wanted to express something, but his ideas seemed to be jumbled up in his brain. He could not construct a sentence. He gave up the attempt and sat in the most abject misery, in which there was not a glimmer of light in the consciousness that he had been obliged to do what he had done.

In another moment Miss Wyckham had pulled in the ponies.

"Is it too much to ask you to walk back, Mr. Llandaff?" she inquired.

The young man sprang out of the carriage almost galvanically. Then he turned back and leaned over the low wheel.

Miss Wyckham's cold eyes did not flinch in their full look at him.

"You will never forgive me!" he cried out, sharply. "And yet, surely, surely it was the only thing to do!"

"Certainly, the only thing. Why need we talk further on the subject?"

But Llandaff held the wheel. Miss Wyckham smiled a very little, her lips tightening across her teeth unpleasantly as she did so.

"Mr. Llandaff," she said, "might one ask if Miss North returns your admiration?"

Thus Miss Wyckham revealed that, though well bred, she was not thoroughbred.

Llandaff felt as if that whip had stung him in the face.

He drew back. He lifted his hat and bowed ceremoniously. The ponies darted on. Into the face of their driver there came a deeply crimson color which, when it had subsided, left her quite pale. She was conscious that she had not blushed before for several years.

As for Llandaff, he stood there watching the carriage until it turned a corner.

Then he shook himself much as a mere animal might shake off fetters. He looked at his watch. Then he jumped over the roadside fence and went at the fastest walk across the pasture toward the hotel.

As he reached one of the entrances he saw Miss Wyckham's ponies being led round to the stables.

When the next boat left for Boston, in spite of all his relief, he was not "enjoying his mind," although he was on board and knew that he had done the only honorable thing, under the circumstances, that there was to do. Still virtue very frequently is not its own reward, notwithstanding a long cherished belief to the contrary.

Llandaff knew that if Katharine were to be taken from the world that day he could never love Miss Wyckham. He knew he had not even imagined he loved her when he had asked her to marry him. There was the bitterness, the unforgivagleness of his mistake. He felt in a way dishonored that he should have done such a thing. Whether he had met Katharine or not, he had no right to offer marriage to a woman because he liked her, and believed she would make him the kind of wife of whom he should approve.

That he had seen Katharine, of course, had brought all this home to him with overmastering force; but the fact had been there all the time, ready to spring into disastrous life.

Better now than later, however.

As he sat on the deck of the steamer he wondered if Miss Wyckham had fancied that she loved him. He was sure she had not. He wanted to shiver as he recalled the look in her eyes when she had turned toward him.

Of course she had been angry. Llandaff suddenly stood up and flung his head back as he recalled her mention of Miss North's name.

And at the recollection a rush of other emotion came to him. He went to the railing and leaned over it, following the ship's track intently with vague gaze. He forgot Miss Wyckham. His thoughts ran on to the end of his journey. He felt himself a man free to seek and ask for happiness. Whether he would attain it—that he could not guess. The thraldom of the last few weeks was now so galling in his memory that he wondered how he had endured it. But it had all come through his own fault. It was an episode he would be long in forgetting, one that would sting him to a galling humiliation as long as he lived, he thought.

Mrs. Llandaff was not yet tired of Cap'n Marble's little room under the roof, or of that continuous roar that sounded night and day in her ears. She esteemed it one of the necessities as well as one of the pleasures of her life to give a time to mere existence, when her mind dozed languidly in unison with her body.

She had an old sail stretched upon poles in Cap'n Marble's yard, and in the shadow of this she swung a hammock. Being a woman capable of entire inaction as well as of the most vehement exertion she would lie completely inert for hours in the hammock, moved only by the wind. Sometimes her eyes were open, oftener they were closed.

Once Katharine, lying on the grass near, offered to read to her.

"Read to me!" almost exclaimed Mrs. Llandaff. "Child, I wouldn't be read to for the world. I do not intend to have a thought while I'm here. As for you, do what you please. Get acquainted with yourself, for I don't imagine you've ever had much chance to do that."

And the girl did not wish to read, either. She would stroll off upon the solitary beach. In those days the ocean told her strange and beautiful things. She did not think at all, or it seemed as if she did not. She only lived in that rare and sublimated kind of way which is only permitted to some favored human beings, and only once in their lives to them.

Opening her eyes as she lay in the hammock one day in the third week of their stay at Cap'n Marble's, Mrs. Llandaff's lazy vision saw Katharine far off on the beach, at the place where the shore made a curve to the northward.

Even at that distance Mrs. Llandaff could discern that she was only sitting quietly looking out to sea and that she was not troubled.

Katharine's hours of being troubled were very much fewer now.

Mrs. Llandaff, for some reason, half rose from the hammock. She put her feet on the ground as if she must be ready to start. Then she sat quietly, still gazing at that distant figure of a girl sitting on the sands.

Presently something else came within range of her sight. Of course that something else was a man walking round the curve.

"It is always a man who comes upon a scene like that," was the woman's impatient thought.

She rose and went forward to the edge of the bluff.

She was wondering if Mr. Grove had so far escaped from the clutches of rheumatic fever as to come here. Then she reflected that Mr. Grove could not know where Katharine was. It was only Colburn North who knew Mrs. Llandaff's Boston address, whence letters would be forwarded to her.

No, that was not Marcellus Grove. With a movement quicker than any she had employed since she came to this place, Mrs. Llandaff went to her room and returned with a field glass.

She levelled it at the two and looked intently through it. After a prolonged gaze she deliberately returned the glass to its case. But she did not go back to the hammock. She sat down in a chair near. There was an intent, concentrated expression on her face.

Out there, where the coast of Maine, having gone as far toward Europe as was possible, changes and dips toward the north, Katharine had almost fallen asleep.

She had slipped downward until her head rested on her arm. She was dreaming, though not soundly sleeping.

She moved in that indefinite way which is characteristic of a sleeper. She thought some one spoke to her. When she thought this she knew she must be soundly sleeping, for there was never any one on the beach; that was the lovely thing about this beach, there was never any one in sight.

Llandaff stood a few yards away looking at her. But he could not allow himself that indulgence, it seemed so unfair. So he pronounced her name.

He had purposely come so that he might have the long tramp round the beach from the north. He hesitated. Then he pronounced her name again. This time she opened her eyes and fixed them upon him.

"I didn't mean to startle you," he said.

She smiled lazily.

"So you aren't a dream?" she asked.

"Stern reality," he responded, his spirits bounding up absurdly. "Prove my assertion. Shake hands with me."

She extended her hand.

She rose hastily to her feet.

"We were not expecting you," she said, thinking she must say something.

"Naturally. I came as suddenly as the wind shifts. Don't say you're sorry," with a quick glance.

"Oh, no; we are——" Here Katharine could not tell whether it would be true to say that they were glad; so she could not say it.

It had been so extremely beautiful without Owen Llandaff that it could hardly be possible it would be quite so beautiful with him. But he would not stay. He would have to go back to that girl to whom he was engaged.

Llandaff looked at her again. Indeed, he found great difficulty in refraining from looking at her. And just at this moment of his life there came to him a phrase that insistently remained with him.

It was a most annoyingly sentimental phrase. But he could not get rid of it, and was as helpless before it as if he had been a youth of twenty instead of having almost half a score more of years on his head.

"She is the light of my eyes," were the words that leaped from somewhere at his throat, or, more sentimentally still, at his heart.

The essential meaning of those words settled down with an absorbing power upon his mind. These words were delightful, and they were full of torture.

All through the latter half of his journey from Nantasket his mind had been entirely occupied with this girl.

It might be possible that, when he met her again, some of the glamor would have fallen from his vision. Such a thing as that had happened to him before now. He might have remembered her differently from what she was.

No, he had not. She was standing before him now with that indescribable, ineffable something about her which one human being sometimes has for another human being.

A delicious, poignant sense of the loveliness of lefe tingled through the young man's consciousness. He immediately set himself to conceal this sense. It seemed to him that the most careless observer in seeing him would explain.

"Look at him! That fellow's in love."

Making a decided effort Llandaff moved a step and gave his attention to the ocean while he remarked that after that hesitation about saying she was glad to see him, he should always believe absolutely everything she said.

"Oh, Mr. Llandaff," she began, "I know I must seem rude to you. I needn't have begun such a sentence."

"Since you couldn't finish it," turning again to her and now going on rapidly, "I'm so glad to see that you are happier, Miss North. Whatever the cloud was, it has certainly lifted. I knew it would. Do you remember that I prophesied happiness for you?"

"I remember," her eyes falling as she spoke.

She supposed it was this young man's way to have that gentle, yet curiously electric kind of vehemence in his voice when he spoke earnestly. But it was quite impossible to look at him when he spoke thus.

"And the cloud is gone?" he asked in the same tone.

His words seemed to make the cloud come back and spread over her face.

"Forgive me," he almost whispered.

"You need no forgiveness," she answered. "I was thinking that it must be necessary for some people to be under a cloud."

"But not for you, Miss North, not for you."

Llandaff found it impossible to talk in the ordinary way with this girl if he were alone with her. His heart sprang too imperiously to his lips.

Katharine began to walk along the beach.

"There is nothing about me that I should be exempt from suffering," she said.

She wished to reach a more impersonal topic. She began to walk still faster. Somehow it was not easy to think of an impersonal remark.

At last, however, she was able to ask her companion something about his journey, and after that the talk flowed on with perfectly conventional propriety.

Mrs. Llandaff had descended the steps from the bluff to the beach. She walked forward to meet the two.

"I was sure that was you, Owen," she said.

"Naturally you would know me," he responded. "Even Miss North recognized me—after she had wakened. But she couldn't conscientiously say that you and she would be glad to see me. How is it with you, Mrs. Llandaff? Can you give me a drop of comfort?"

"Not a drop. It's atrocious in you, Owen, coming down here now. Do you expect we are going to try to entertain you?"

"I expect nothing. I am abject."

"I'm glad of that. It will do you good to be abject."

Llandaff gazed smilingly at his stepmother. When he smiled like that she knew she could do nothing with him, and that she could not tell what was in his mind.

"I thought, perhaps, I might be able to entertain you and Miss North," he suggested. "You know my capabilities in the way of entertainment. Ought I to rehearse them, that Miss North may be able to judge also?"

He turned toward Katharine as he went on.

"I'm a capital end man in a minstrel troupe," he said. "I'm really beautiful when I'm blacked. I can dance a clog dance—I have a lovely tenor voice, and I can accompany myself on a guitar—I can manage a boat; I can——"

Mrs. Llandaff, who had been watching him, now interrupted:

"Owen," she said, ruthlessly, "no one cares in the least whether you are entertaining or not."

"Why is it, Miss North," asked the young man, "that the members of one's own family are always so unwilling to acknowledge one's talents?"

"How is Miss Wyckham?" inquired Mrs. Llandaff.

"Very well, thank you."

"Perhaps she is coming to Bar Harbor?"

"I think not."

Katharine here began to mount the steps to the top of the bluff. The two did not immediately follow her.

"Owen," said Mrs. Llandaff, "tell me why you are here?" And without waiting for a reply she went on almost with excitement: "And a moment ago, when I saw you before you saw me, you looked happy, dangerously happy. Owen, don't let me distrust you."

THE RABBIT PLAGUE.

From The London Daily News.

Queensland is dreading the invasion of rabbits, which have worked so much havoc in other Australian colonies and have recently become a scourge in some of the chief wool-producing centres of New South Wales. Border fences are being erected, and Queensland newspapers contain minute instructions for the destruction of the dreaded animals. In the dry season tanks of poisoned water are laid for the rabbits, and when they are not likely to want water poisoned grain and sticks are freely distributed. A Brisbane paper says that in New South Wales millions of rabbits have been killed with poisoned sticks, which are laid along the banks of rivers, creeks, lagoons, and waterholes. The twigs which rabbits most prefer are sandalwood, emu bush and turpentine bush, and are cut in lengths of about twelve inches. Smoking out is sometimes accomplished by means of bisulphide of carbon. A piece of wool or cloth saturated with the carbon is inserted into the mouth of one burrow, all the other burrows being blocked. The piece of wool is then set on fire, the remaining burrow filled in, and the fumes penetrate throughout the workings and suffocate all the rabbits that are in them.

TOPICS IN PARIS.

SIGNING A MARRIAGE CONTRACT IN THE FAUBOURG ST. GERMAIN—PETARDS.

Paris, July 28.

The President of the Republic and Mme. Carnot, accompanied by the household of the Elysee, left Paris on Thursday afternoon for Fontainebleau, where they will remain for several weeks. The President was loudly cheered at the Lyons terminus, and his reception at Fontainebleau was equally flattering. All the civil and military officials were at the station to meet him, and the town was decorated with flags and Venetian masts. The ordinary Cabinet Councils will be held in Paris during M. Carnot's absence, but there will be occasional gatherings of the Ministers at Fontainebleau.

Among the officials who rejoice at the President's departure are the hapless sergeants de ville, whose duty it is when the Chief of the State is here to patrol the neighborhood of the Elysee Palace at all hours of the day and night, in order to see to M. Carnot's safety. They can now enjoy a well-earned and well-deserved rest.

The ruins of the historical Chateau of St. Cloud have been sold by auction for the ridiculously small amount of $600 to a Parisian building contractor named Kiessel, who has undertaken to remove them within the space of four months. After the clearance, the site will be transformed into gardens like those of the Tuileries. The new Ecole Polytechnique will be erected a little higher up. The Mayor and inhabitants of the picturesque suburb protested in vain against the removal of the ruins, on the ground that they had gradually become a resort for tourists and a source of great profit to the locality.

In spite of the fact that all the fashionable people have left Paris for the seaside and country residences, the superb salons of the Duchesse de Doudeauville were crowded last week for the signature of the marriage contract of her daughter Marie with Henri, Marquis d'Harcourt de Beuvron. This marriage will constitute a fresh bond of relationship between two of the oldest and grandest ducal families in France. The bridegroom is a dashing young officer of chasseurs, very handsome, and possessing ancien-regime manners now seldom found among the young generation, but which he acquired from his father, the Duc d'Harcourt, who, although small and slight in stature, is the perfect type of a grand-seigneur. He devoted many years of his life to the restoration of the magnificent Castle of Harcourt in Calvados, Brittany, with the gratifying result of making it one of the show-places of France. His wife, who was a Mercy d'Argenteau by birth, is one of the wittiest women in the Faubourg St. Germain, and shares with the Duchesse de Doudeauville the honor of being also one of the recognized leaders of fashion and of Parisian society in general.

The Duc de Doudeauville, on the other hand, is far from being a shining light as far as intelligence and wit are concerned. When French Ambassador at the Court of St. James a few years ago, he created a tremendous sensation by making a speech in the French Chamber of Deputies wherein he declared his faithful and absolute allegiance to the Comte de Chambord (Henri V), and his strict opposition to the Republic, which he was then serving. So oblivious was he of the want of tact and discretion displayed by him on this memorable occasion that he showed much indignation when, a few days later, he was deprived of his diplomatic mission by the French Government in consequence of the rash course he had so publicly adopted. Another daughter of the Duc and Duchesse de Doudeauville is the Duchesse de Luynes, who, with her son, spent a summer at Newport three years ago.

On the night when the contract was signed the Hotel Doudeauville was exquisitely decorated with a royal profusion of flowers, the entrance to the great tapestried hall being transformed into a regular bower of pink and white roses and tall African palms, from which broad garlands of countless half-open buds were slung tent fashion. One of the first guests to arrive was the Duc de Chartres, accompanied by the Duc d'Aumale and by the Marquis de Villasegura, Master of Ceremonies to Her Majesty ex-Queen Isabella II of Spain. The entire Diplomatic Corps was present as were also the most prominent members of the French aristocracy who had returned from the country to accept the invitation of the Duc and Duchesse de Doudeauville. The wedding presents were exhibited in a large salon on the ground floor, decorated throughout with snowy Japanese lilies, orange and lemon blossoms and gloxenias of the same virginal hue. No pen can describe the magnificence of the offerings sent to the happy young couple, and which were tastefully arranged on white plush-draped tables and etagères. The Duchesse gave her daughter a priceless collar of diamonds and gigantic rubies, a rivière of diamonds composed of three rows of gems and an aigrette of brilliants over four inches high. The Princesse de Ligne gave an antique silver dinner service of unique workmanship and a dressing case in gold set with turquoise and brilliant monograms. The Dowager Duchesse de Luynes a parure of emeralds and diamonds, the Princesse Charles de Ligne, a table centrepiece of massive silver representing a boar-hunt; the Duchesse de Polignac, a large star of pink and white diamonds; the Countesse Branicka, a bracelet of three rows of diamonds; and the old Duchesse de Chevreuse, a large diamond and sapphire arrow. There were no less than seventeen diamond brooches, six diamond rivière necklaces, three collars of pearls, while as to rings, earrings and pendants, they were so numerous that they could have stocked several jewelry stores. Among the useful and practical presents were a splendidly appointed victoria from Count Charles d'Harcourt and a no less elegant coupé from the Counts Armand and Edouard de la Rochefoucauld. The trousseau, which was exhibited in the morning room of the Duchesse, was a glimpse of fairyland, the furs and laces alone being of almost fabulous value. The bridegroom presented the bride with a diadem of diamonds mounted in invisible setting, which caused it to look like a shower of immense dewdrops, a diamond stomacher, a collar of eight rows of pearls, two diamond hearts bound together with a true-lover's knot of sapphires, a dress of point d'Angleterre, and a cloak lined with blue-fox fur valued at $8,000. The fair bride will wear this peerless dress over white satin on the wedding day. The ceremony will be one of the most beautiful ones which have taken place here for a long time past. Queen Isabella has announced her intention of being present and most of the fine-fleur of the French aristocracy, as well as many foreigners of distinction, figure on the list of invitations.

A brave officer, whose entire life has been one of abnegation and unswerving devotion to his friend and chief, died a few days ago at the Invalides, where he had been admitted after countless sorrows and sufferings. I speak of Lieutenant-Colonel Willette, who won all his military grades on the field of battle, receiving the cross of Chevalier of the Legion of Honor at the battle of Marignan, and that of officer of the order during the fight at San Lorenzo. In 1858 he was attached as aide-de-camp to the person of Marechal Bazaine, and from that moment he clung to his chief through glory and disgrace, for better, for worse, in victory and defeat, with a constancy rarely equalled, but all the more touching in its unswerving fidelity. Together Bazaine and Willette went to Mexico, together they were besieged at Metz, together they were imprisoned at Cassel awaiting the hour of the trial at the Trianon, where the old Marechal of France was convicted of high treason. Willette never consented to believe in the charges made against his chief, with whom he obtained permission to be incarcerated at Versailles, and later on, at the prison of the Island of St. Marguerite. After the Marshal's escape from the island, Willette was arrested for alleged complicity in the evasion, and after serving a sentence of six months in the fort St. Nicholas, he was released to find that his military career had been brought to a close by the removal of his name from the active list of the army. Poverty stricken and deserted by his friends, Lieutenant-Colonel Willette endeavored to eke out a livelihood by writing for the papers on military subjects until the time when he reached the age giving him right to a home at the Invalides. There he has lived for the last twelve years, his only consolation being the justly deserved artistic success of his son, a well-known young painter. Not an eye was dry when the humble coffin of the brave soldier was borne by eight invalides in uniform into the chapel where Napoleon I. lies buried; for the Lieutenant-Colonel had become the idol of all these old soldiers who are the living remnants of so many different classes of the French Army.

The Parisians will amuse themselves, notwithstanding the morose humor of the Prefect of Police, who is disposed to treat every high-spirited youth who throws paper confetti into a lady's face, or tickles her ear with a peacock's feather without asking her consent, as if he were an unmuzzled dog. The paper confetti—little bits of thin paper the size of wafers—made their first appearance at the last Carnival, and were then accepted as a very amusing innovation. Ladies themselves, standing on balconies, threw them at the crowd. It was only when they were picked up from the gutters, with the dust with which they were there mixed, and thrown again, that the pelted people lost their temper, and declared that the game was no longer funny. At the Gingerbread Fair, which soon followed, the throwing of wafers and dust at every woman who showed herself on the Place du Trone became such a nuisance that the proprietors of wild beasts, theatres on wheels, two-headed calves and monstrosities in wax signed a memorial to the Prefect, asking him to put down the objectionable practice which grievously interfered with their business. M. Loze ordered the police to arrest all persons caught in the act of throwing confetti. But the Paris youth were not to be so easily baffled. The wafers had excited their taste for teasing, and so they brought out at the Neuilly Fair the Peacock feather, which "Pierrot" introduced so long ago at Carnival time. At first the ladies thought that the flies at Neuilly were exceedingly wicked, but they soon found that feathers were the cause of irritation. The annoyance became such that the showmen again protested. The Prefect again interfered. He made it an offence to tickle a fellow creature with a feather, even at a fair. At the National Fete, however, confetti and feathers reappeared, and were so gayly used that no little fighting was the consequence. The Parisians, usually so good-tempered when they are trying to amuse themselves, must have been decidedly quarrelsome on July 14, to judge from the hospital record. The blame has been chiefly laid upon confetti, feathers and "petards." These last are an invention more diabolic than the American firecracker. They have sufficient explosive power to do considerable mischief in a crowd. The Paris gamin is never so happy as when he has his pocket full of "petards," and one of his chief delights on the National Fete is to place them lighted on the side of the pavement and watch the effect upon the petticoated portion of the public. The police find it easier to catch a stray dog than one of these boys.

This year the number of paintings, etchings and statues which have been seized by merciless creditors, right in the midst of the Salon des Champs Elysees and the Salon du Champ de Mars, is quite abnormal; indeed, sixty instances where the artist has seen his property seized for debt are on record. Among them are some truly superb works of art, the authors of which will pay a heavy penalty for allowing themselves to become indebted, for the tribunals will order a sale at public auction of their choicest chefs-d'oeuvre, which will be knocked down to the highest bidder without any consideration whatsoever for the feelings of the unfortunate artists, and merely with a view of profiting the harpies in whose clutches they are now writhing.

From time immemorial, some forty of the public market women here have been allowed to keep open-air stalls for the sale of soup in the streets surrounding the Halles, where they dispense a succulent mixture from midnight until midday at one and two cents per basin. During the winter months and periods of chilly weather the soup stalls do a highly lucrative business, and some of the lucky proprietresses are said to be quite well off. Needless to say that their clients are mainly an agglomeration of the riffraff and the very dregs of society. The lowest outcast can, as a rule, beg, borrow or steal the small sum of one sou, and armed with this, he is naturally prone to spend it on a basin of temptingly odoriferous soup about the composition of which he is not inclined to display any great amount of undue curiosity. So many complaints have reached the police authorities as to the behavior of the bad characters among this heterogenous crowd that orders were recently given for them to be dispersed, and by some mistake, the constables also cleared away a number of the soup vendors themselves. The hubbub which ensued was indescribable; but it proved so effective that directions were at once given for the forty ladies to be left unmolested in the pursuit of their lucrative calling.

DID BACON WRITE SHAKESPEARE?

From The Indianapolis Journal.

It is worthy of remark that, so far as known, neither party to the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy has ever brought out the fact that Lord Bacon wrote and published a volume of poems over his own name. The misguided enthusiasts who claim that Bacon wrote Shakespeare's plays say that he never avowed their authorship because he did not wish to cloud his fame and memory by linking them with such productions. Let us see what he did link with them. In 1624, eight years after Shakespeare's death, and two years before that of Bacon, the latter published a little volume of poems entitled "Translation of Certain Psalmes into English Verse, by the Right Honorable Francis Lo. Verulam, Viscount St. Alban." One of Bacon's biographers, who is very partial to his subject, selects what he considers the best poem in the volume and gives it as a sample of what Bacon could do. Two of the stanzas are as follows:

"When as we sat all sad and desolate
By Babylon upon the river side,
Eas'd from the tasks which in our captive state
We were enforc'd daily to abide,
Our harps we had brought with us to the field,
Some solace to our heavy souls to yield.

"But soon we found we fail'd of our account,
For when our minds from freedom did obtain,
Straightway the memory of Sion Mount
Did cause afresh our wounds to bleed again;
So that with present griefs and future fears,
Our eyes burst forth into a stream of tears.

"As for our harps, since sorrow struck them dumb
We hang'd them on the willow trees were near!"

Remember, these are given as the best verses in a volume published by Bacon over his own name two years before his death. Yet we are asked by Mr. Ignatius Donnelly and some other equally credulous people to believe that the same person who composed these feeble and commonplace lines also wrote Shakespeare's plays and was ashamed to acknowledge them.

A QUESTION OF ETIQUETTE.

HOW SHALL A GENTLEMAN SALUTE HIS SERVANTS?

In a recent issue of "The St. James's Gazette," of London, I find a letter bearing the signature "A Suburban Bachelor" and containing inquiries as to the proper form of salutation between social superiors and inferiors. The difficulty under which the "Suburban Bachelor" labors, and which has prompted him to write the letter above mentioned, consists in his lack of knowledge of the correct thing to do when he happens to meet in the street one of the female domestics of his establishment. Is he to ignore the girl's presence? or is he to cross the street to avoid her? The latter alternative is manifestly wanting in dignity, while the idea of cutting an honest girl dead out of doors, when one receives her ministrations smilingly indoors, is repellant to any man who has his heart in the right place. The "Bachelor"—he is an Englishman, remember—adds that "a bow is so clearly inappropriate" that he has never tried it, and confesses that in despair he is forced to seek refuge in smiling inanely at the girl, who naturally follows his example. Keenly sensible of the incongruity of the position, the "Bachelor" asks for advice on this momentous question of etiquette, which he claims to have been left unrecognized by the various manuals of manners and good breeding.

The question put by the suburban bachelor is a very characteristic one. Even without the signature of the letter, it would be easy to perceive from its tenor that its writer is an Englishman. No Frenchman, nor in fact, any member of the Latin or southern races, would have ever felt the slightest embarassment or hesitation as to the proper form of salutation to be adopted toward an inferior. They do not find that a bow is "clearly inappropriate," but, on the contrary, raise their hat from their head when they meet in public women occupying menial positions in their households. In their eyes a woman is always a woman, no matter what her social grade or caste, and the only distinction which the Frenchman, for instance, permits himself to make in his form of greeting, is a certain graduation between the sweep of the "coup de chapeau" which he gives to a duchess, and that which he accords to his cook or laundress.

The lower the social status of the salutant, the more marked the graduations of his greetings, whereas the higher his rank the more imperceptible do they become. Royal and Imperial personages, for instance, show a disposition to accord even more courtesy and consideration for the feelings of their domestics than they do to their courtiers and nobles, and nowhere do servants receive better and more appreciative treatment than in princely households.

I remember, for instance, to have seen one day at Schoenbrunn the chivalrous Emperor of Austria walk some distance to fetch a chair for the old English nurse of the children of his daughter, the Archduchess Gisela, who were playing in the grounds. The nurse had the Archduchess's youngest child, an infant, in her arms, and no one save the Emperor seemed to dream of the possibility of her being tired. It was very charming to see the genial, kindly way in which he pressed the old woman to take the seat which he had fetched for her.

It was but last winter that we read of the Czar and his brothers walking for two miles on foot and bareheaded in a blinding snowstorm behind the hearse containing the remains of the old Scotch woman who had had charge of the Imperial nursery when they were all children. No such compliment as this has ever been paid by the Autocrat to any of the great dignitaries of his realm who have died during the past ten years, and the aged nurse of humble birth was accorded by His Muscovite Majesty a courtesy withheld from famous generals, statesmen, princes and princesses.

Queen Victoria, who is so chary about extending her still shapely hand in greeting, even for the purpose of its being kissed, shakes hands in the most natural and unaffected manner with her old servants on the Osborne, Windsor and Balmoral estates, and, although s[illegible] descended to honor any of the S[illegible] either at Buckingham Palace or at Marlborough House, with her presence since the death of the Prince Consort, over thirty years ago, yet she was wont before rendered infirm by her rheumatic ailment of the last two or three years, to attend the servants' balls given at her Highland Castle, and even to dance with some of her principal domestics. If I remember right, the late John Brown was several times distinguished in this fashion by his sovereign.

The reigning Grandduchess of Baden, sister of the late Emperor Frederick, has just erected a magnificent monument over the grave of the chief dresser or principal lady's maid who had served her mother, the late Empress Augusta, during the last forty years of the latter's life. The tomb bears an inscription to the effect that it is destined to commemorate the gratitude of the daughter of the Empress to the latter's faithful and devoted servant, whose deathbed was attended by the Grand Duchess and the Grand Duke in person.

If I cite these instances, it is merely to convince any one who might happen to share the perplexities of the "suburban bachelor" that, at any rate, Emperors, Kings and Princes—the "Anointed of the Lord" and the "Salt of the Earth" in fact—would not consider a bow or any similar act of courtesy accorded to one of the female domestics of their households as "clearly inappropriate."

The fact is the average Englishman has failed as yet to grasp the art of bowing, that is to say, of saluting with his hat. True, his manners in this respect have undergone a considerable improvement during the last quarter of a century—an improvement attributable to the vast increase of intercourse with the French and other continental nations. But, five and twenty years ago, in Palmerstonian days, an Englishman who doffed his hat correctly, or who bared his head and threw away his cigar when addressing a woman, was considered by his countrymen as "foreign," "Frenchy," "affected" and "bad form." I have heard all of these terms applied to the late Earl Granville, who, having been educated on the Continent, and brought up at the foreign courts, to which his father was accredited as Ambassador, was the very impersonification of delicate, refined and elegant courtesy. I remember my astonishment in those days, when, just after returning from the Continent, I saw a young Peer approach and address the Princess of Wales, keeping his hat on his head throughout the conversation, barely touching it on greeting her and on taking his leave. In those days, however, hats seemed glued to their wearers' heads, a state of affairs partly attributable, perhaps, to the English practice of keeping the head covered both in the House of Commons and in all the apartments of a club, save the dining-room.

Foreign intercourse, as I stated above, and the fashion set by the Prince of Wales, whose genial courtesy is above reproach, have done much during the past two decades to initiate the Briton to the mysterious art of the "coup de chapeau." That the lesson taught has not been altogether as successful and complete is apparent from the characteristically English inquiry of the London suburban bachelor.

EX-ATTACHE.

WORK OF A THUNDERBOLT.

From The London Globe.

One of the most interesting strokes of lightning on record occurred at Bourges, France, on May 4 last, of which a French scientific journal has now given accurate particulars. On that day, eighteen men of the 37th Regiment of Artillery were marching in the polygon outside of Bourges, under the conduct of Chief-Artificer Beauvais. A heavy shower made them run for shelter, but in doing so a flash of lightning literally mowed them down, with the exception of Beauvais, who marched behind. The three first ranks quickly regained their feet, but four men remained insensible, and were carried to the hospital, where one, named Bouveau, who had walked a little apart, died. The clothes of the victim were, as usual, torn, and his boots burst open.

Bouveau was struck on the head, and his kepi and hair were burned. The discharge passed by the right ear to the shoulder and left haunch, then down the inner surface of the left leg. The iron nails of the boot made a good contact with the ground; but the leather of the sole appears to have offered great resistance, for the discharge left the boot at a point between the heel and the upper.